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## City Attorney Klein Provides Update on City's Ongoing Response to Latitude Five25, Announces Contempt Filing to Send Property into Receivership

*Klein says catastrophic system failures forced evacuation of apartments, gave City green light to move forward to hold owners in contempt of court order and appoint receiver to take over property*

**COLUMBUS, OH**— Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein today provided an update on conditions at the Latitude Five25 Apartments following the evacuation of the building after bursting water pipes led to flooding, loss of water and heat, and rendered fire suppression and three out of four elevators inoperable this past weekend.

City Attorney's Office staff were on site alongside Code Enforcement, Police and Fire on Christmas Day to help coordinate the response, connecting residents with shelter and resources, including working with COTA to transport more than two dozen residents to a temporary evacuation site at Dodge Park Rec Center. City Attorney's Office staff visited residents at the Dodge Park Rec Center Tuesday to answer resident questions and provide an update on the status of the City's court case against the owners of Latitude Five25, Paxe Latitude.

**"Frozen pipes caused incredible damage on Latitude Five25's building systems, bursting pipes, flooding apartments and cutting water and heat to units, leading to the buildings being evacuated and dozens of residents transported to a temporary evacuation center,"** said City Attorney Zach Klein. **"This response was a team effort, with City Attorney's Office staff working alongside City and County partners to coordinate a response to connect residents with resources and shelter. My office will remain in contact with tenants worried about their future while these apartments remain unlivable."**

In November, Paxe Latitude entered into an agreement with the City of Columbus and the property's lender for the sale and transfer of the property within 90 days. Under the terms of the agreement, failure to close on the sale within the 90-day timeframe or abide by certain provisions of the agreement to maintain systems, utilities and operations would immediately trigger the takeover of the property by a receivership group.

On Tuesday, the City Attorney's Office announced it intends to file a motion for contempt against Paxe Latitude, potentially setting into motion the transfer of the property to a

receivership group to take over the property, facilitate repairs and begin to prepare the property for sale.

**“From the start, the City has maintained it will do whatever it takes to provide better, safer living conditions for residents, and with recent system failures making these apartments unlivable, the City is stepping in to urge the court to appoint a receiver to take over the property and get it back in working order,”** said City Attorney Klein. **“With the 90-day window running out and residents and families forced from their homes, we need to act with urgency to get the right team in place to manage this property and meet the needs of residents.”**

City Attorney Klein noted that any potential receiver or any future property owner will still be subject to the terms of the City’s nuisance order as long as it remains open, which will require any ownership or management group to keep the property in compliance with all applicable city and state codes, maintain security, and ensure safe, sanitary living conditions for tenants.

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